

ed by Castelnau et Deville, in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, no. 1991–1195, as the lectotype of *Nasica beauperthuisii* Pucheran & Lafresnaye, 1850.

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## A second museum specimen of Large-billed Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus orinus*

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While checking specimens of Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum* from India at the Natural History Museum, Tring, in September 2006, PRK noticed a bird with a bill rather longer and broader than in other specimens. The bird, collected in October 1869 in Uttar Pradesh, was examined in detail by PRK and B. J. Small. Measurement confirmed the large bill. As it was in moult, with the outer primaries partly grown, few wing formula criteria could be checked, but emargination was noted on p5 (primaries numbered ascendently). Moreover, the freshly growing body plumage was slightly warmer than in newly moulted Blyth's Reed Warbler. It was compared with the holotype of Large-billed Reed Warbler *A. orinus*, also held at Tring, and, though a shade paler above, the specimen

was considered to be of the same species. DJP then examined and measured the bird, and agreed with the identification, noting tarsus and hindclaw lengths above ranges expected in Blyth's Reed Warbler, broad tips to the newly growing primaries, and rather narrow tips to the growing central tail-feathers. A small skin sample from the sole of the specimen's toe was then sent to SB for DNA analysis.

DNA extraction and molecular analyses followed Bensch & Pearson (2002). Because the sample was old, and the DNA partially degraded, the cytochrome-*b* segment between the primers L14841 and H15149 could not be amplified as one contiguous fragment. Four sets of primer pairs were therefore used as previously specified (Table 2 in Bensch & Pearson 2002). Successful amplifications were obtained with all of the four combinations of primers and direct sequencing from both ends resulted in a concatenated sequence of 306 novel nucleotides. The sequence obtained (GenBank accession no. EU490497) differed from published sequences of the type specimen (Bensch & Pearson 2002) and a live bird trapped in Thailand in March 2006 (Round *et al.* 2007), at six and five positions respectively (all being transitions), corresponding to sequence divergences of <2%. The two previously published Large-billed Reed Warbler sequences give the best BLAST-hits in the GenBank database, followed by several cytochrome-*b* sequences from Blyth's Reed Warbler. A cytochrome-*b* divergence of 2% is certainly high for intra-species divergence in birds (Johns & Avise 1998), but is not exceptional within *Acrocephalus* (Leisler *et al.* 1997). All other known Eurasian *Acrocephalus* taxa have been sequenced, and cytochrome-*b* divergences between these and the Uttar Pradesh bird exceed 7%. The molecular analysis thus supports the bird being the third known example of Large-billed Reed Warbler.

Full details of the specimen are as follows (measurements in mm): registration no. 98.9.1.1233, collected in October 1869 at Mussourie, Uttar Pradesh, India, by W. E. Brookes. Sex female. Wing (close to full length) 59; tail (slightly short of full length) 55; bill-length (to skull) 20.0; bill-width (across rear of nostrils) 4.7; tarsus 24.5; hindclaw 7.3. The body and head plumage are freshly moulted. The primaries are in moult, with the inner six feathers on each wing new, pp2–4 partly grown and p1 missing. The inner secondaries are also partly grown. The central tail-feathers are in sheath and apparently not full length. The plain olive-brown upperparts are rather warmer and slightly darker than in freshly moulted Blyth's Reed Warbler, whilst the underparts possess a stronger buffy-brown wash across the breast. The lower mandible appears deeper than in Blyth's Reed Warbler, and broader towards the tip. It is entirely pale, lacking the dusky sides near the tip shown in Blyth's Reed, and this tends to enhance its oversized impression.

It now appears that there are three examples of this little-known species: a) the type, an unsexed bird collected near Rampur, Himachal Pradesh, north India, on 11 November 1867, a poorly prepared skin with indications of incomplete growth on pp2–4; b) the bird mist-netted at Liam Pak, south-west Thailand, on 27 March 2006, described in detail by Round *et al.* (2007); and c) the October specimen discussed here. Based on these three examples, the criteria for distinguishing Large-billed Reed Warbler from Blyth's Reed Warbler in the field or the museum appear to be the following: the more rounded wing, with wing-point at pp4–5 and p5 emarginated; the larger bill (length to skull >19 mm; width at rear of nostril >4.5 mm); the longer tail (>55 mm) and larger tail/wing ratio (>90%, compared with <85% in Blyth's Reed); the slightly longer tarsus (>23 mm, but potentially overlapping) and longer hindclaw (>7 mm); and distinctly broad-tipped primaries and more point-tipped rectrices.

Hopefully, a search in other museums amongst specimens of small plain-backed *Acrocephalus* from southern Asia will reveal more, previously unidentified, examples of this recently rediscovered species.

### Acknowledgements

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## Designation of a neotype for the dove known as '*Streptopelia risoria*'

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*Columba risoria* (Ringed Dove, Ringed Turtle Dove or Barbary Dove) was described by Linnaeus (1758) and transferred to the genus *Streptopelia* by Bonaparte (1855). These doves are kept in captivity in many parts of the world, being used frequently in biological research (cf. Baptista *et al.* 1997), or as pets by bird fanciers. Feral or escaped populations of *S. risoria* occur in various countries (Donegan & Huertas 2002).

Due to their morphological similarities, *S. risoria* is widely considered to be a domesticated descendant of African Collared Dove *S. roseogrisea* (Sundevall, 1857), which occurs in south-west Mauritania and Senegambia east to coastal Eritrea and Somalia, and Arabia (Gibbs *et al.* 2001). As *S. risoria* is senior to *S. roseogrisea*, application has been made to the International Committee of Zoological Nomenclature to conserve the name *S. roseogrisea*, in order to adopt the same approach to these taxa as that applied to names for domesticated mammals (Donegan 2007).

The nomenclature of *S. risoria* and *S. roseogrisea* is complicated by the apparent reference to individuals of other (current) *Streptopelia* species in the description of *Columba risoria*. Linnaeus (1758) included only a brief, ambiguous text and referred to descriptions by Aldrovandi (1599), Willughby (1678), Ray (1713) and Albin (1738). These works include plates and descriptions of birds similar to leucistic, domestic Ringed Doves (Aldrovandi and Willughby plates; Aldrovandi, Willughby and Ray descriptions of the 'male'), birds currently referred to as wild *S. roseogrisea* (possibly, Aldrovandi, Willughby and Ray descriptions of the 'female') and birds currently referred to as wild Eurasian Collared Dove *S. decaocto* (Fridvaldszky, 1838) (Albin's plate and description and, possibly, Aldrovandi, Willughby and Ray descriptions of the 'female'). The specimens illustrated by Aldrovandi (copied by Willughby) and Albin were probably live on depiction and are undoubtedly lost.

Although Baptista *et al.* (1997) noted that *S. decaocto* and *S. risoria* could be synonyms, almost all other literature on the topic ignores Linnaeus' (1758) references to *S. decaocto* or wild *S. roseogrisea* material in the description of *S. risoria*, and treats *S. risoria* as referring to